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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,926	07/07/2003	Fujita Takashi	239954US2	6914
22850	7590	01/11/2005	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				BRASE, SANDRA L
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2852				

DATE MAILED: 01/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/612,926	TAKASHI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Sandra L. Brase	2852	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 October 2004.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-48 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 1,3 and 7-48 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 2 and 4-6 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/15/04.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of Species I in the reply filed 10/20/04 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that examining all of the claims in the case would not result in an undue burden. This is not found persuasive because there would be an undue burden to examine both inventions and all fourteen species since there are so many different inventions, searching all of them would place a serious burden on the examiner. Applicant is to note that the election was for Species I, where applicant designated claims 2-6; however, claim 3 pertains to Species II, and not to Species I; therefore, claim 3 is being withdrawn from consideration as corresponding to a non-elected Species.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

2. Claims 1, 3 and 7-48 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected invention/species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in reply filed 10/20/04.

3. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the

application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Specification

4. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it does not describe the elected species. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

5. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the elected claims are directed.

6. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities.

On page 7, line 15, “temporally” should be changed to “temporarily”.

On page 23, line 5, the figures that “Figs” refers to must be indicated.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

7. Claim 2 is objected to because of the following informality: on line 10 of claim 2, “hip” should be changed to “nip”. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

9. Claims 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by De Bock et al. (US 6,604,461).

10. De Bock et al. (...461) disclose a transfer fixing apparatus comprising: an intermediate transfer member (12) having an outer surface onto which the toner image is transferred; a transfer fixing member (50) having an outer surface onto which the toner image is transferred by the intermediate transfer member; a heating member (66) configured to heat the toner image on the outer surface of the transfer fixing member; and an opposite member (70) formed opposite the transfer fixing member, wherein a nip is formed between the transfer fixing member and the opposite member, the toner image being fixed onto a record medium (58) while passing through the nip (figure 1; and col. 8, lines 26-31); wherein the transfer fixing member is separated from the intermediate transfer member by a thickness of the toner image (figures 1 and 2). A distance changing member is configured to change the contacting pressure between the intermediate transfer member and the transfer fixing member (col. 6, lines 29-40).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

13. Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over De Bock et al. (US 6,604,461) in view of Matsuno (US 5,351,114).

14. De Bock et al. (...461) disclose the features mentioned previously, but do not specifically disclose the time at which the distance changing member is driven. Matsuno (...114) discloses driving a distance changing member that changes a contact pressure between two members involved in transfer before operating for image transfer (col. 11, lines 22-63). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to drive the distance changing member at the claimed timing, as disclosed by Matsuno (...114) so that the desired pressure can be achieved for the entire transferred image.

Prior Art

15. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Landa (US 5,410,392), Berkes et al. (US 6,141,524), Jia et al. (US 6,393,245), Broddin et al. (US 6,650,860) and Nakashima et al. (US 6,745,002) disclose an image forming apparatus including an intermediate transfer member and a transfer fixing member.

Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sandra L. Brase whose telephone number is 571-272-2131. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Arthur T. Grimley, can be reached on 571-272-2136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Sandra L. Brase
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2852

January 6, 2005